October is Children's Health Month

How many tips can you follow in 31 days?

1. Get Your Child Tested for Lead
   Have your child tested for lead at a 12- and 24-months-old by their health care provider of their local health department.

2. Calculate Your Carbon Footprint
   Teach children how they can save energy at home. Find out how your family can reduce home energy use with EPA’s Carbon Emissions Calculator at www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/fo-calculator.

3. Eliminate Asthma Triggers
   Learn what triggers your child’s asthma. Common triggers are cockroaches, pet dander, dust mites, mold, and secondhand smoke. Work with a health professional to develop an asthma management plan. Visit www.epa.gov/asthma or call 1-866-NO-ATTACK.

4. Protect Children from Mold
   The key to mold control is moisture control. If mold is a problem, clean up the mold and get rid of the excess water or moisture. Fix leaky plumbing or other sources of water. Visit www.epa.gov/mold.

5. Keep Our Air Breathable
   Encourage fitness, reduce traffic, and reduce air pollution—all at the same time. Instead of driving your children to school and after-school activities, have them walk, bike, or take public transportation.

6. Protect Your Kids from Lead in Drinking Water
   If you want to know whether your home’s or school’s drinking water contains unsafe levels of lead, have your water tested. For more information on how to test your water, call EPA’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

7. Reduce Mercury Exposure
   Replace mercury thermometers with digital thermometers. If you break a mercury thermometer, keep children away and follow clean-up instructions at www.epa.gov/mercury/spills/index.html#thermometer.

8. Reduce Your Use of Plastic Bags and Bottles
   Pack children’s school lunches in reusable bags and give them a reusable bottle for water at lunch and during sports practices.

9. Protect Children from Lead-Based Paint
   If you live in a home built before 1978, make sure you hire contractors that are trained and certified to follow lead-safe practices for any painting, renovation, or repair jobs.

10. Beware of (Energy) Vampires
    Teach your children to unplug or turn off power strips for countertops, PC radiators, CD players, cell phone chargers, and other appliances. Use only cold water for your water heater to reduce energy and money spent on heating water.

11. Use Water Efficiently
    Teach children to turn the water off while brushing teeth, and to take short (5-minute) showers. Replace old showerheads with WaterSense-labeled showerheads.

12. Reduce Exposure to Air Pollution
    Find out when outdoor air pollution is high in your area at www.AIRNow.gov or from newspapers, TV, or radio stations. Limit children’s outdoor activities when the Air Quality Index rises to unhealthy levels.

13. Reduce Risks from Lead in Drinking Water
    Top water until it becomes cold. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formulas.

14. Help Kids Eat Healthier Food
    Teach your kids more fruits and vegetables, less sugar and sweetenated beverages and processed foods. Have regular family meals. Be a role model by eating healthy yourself.

15. Kids Act Fast and Poisons Do Too
    Install childproof safety locks on kitchen and bathroom cabinets. Post the number for the National Poison Control Center, 1-800-222-1222, where your children can find it in an emergency.

16. Grow Your Own Food
    Even a small garden is good for children, good for everybody. Planting a backyard garden with your kids is a good way to connect with nature—all while creating healthy, homemade produce.

17. Prevent Poisoning
    Store pesticides and other household chemicals where kids can’t reach them, and never put them in other containers that kids can mistake for food or drink.

18. Eat Your Veggies Safely
    Wash fruits and vegetables under cold running water and peel them whenever possible to get rid of dirt, bacteria, and pesticide residues.

19. Keep Your House Pest-Free

20. Protect Your Children from Carbon Monoxide Poisoning
    Have a trained professional inspect, clean, and tune your central heating system—furnaces, fires, and chimneys. Also, check for possible leaks in your home by spraying leak-detection solutions around areas where gases are likely to leak. For more information, visit www.epa.gov/energy/carbonmonoxide.

21. Reduce Exposure to Chemical Residues
    Always wash children’s hands before they eat or nap. Wash their stuffed animals and toys often. Regularly clean floors, window ledges, and other surfaces to reduce possible exposure to lead and pesticide residues.

22. Watch Out for Lyme Disease
    Lyme disease is spread by ticks. Children can be at higher risk for tick bites because they play outside and are closer to the ground. Dress children in pants and long-sleeved shirts in areas where ticks are prevalent and apply insect repellent as an extra precaution.

23. Don’t Smoke Around Children
    Until you quit, choose to smoke outside. Do not smoke in your home or car and do not allow family and others in your home to smoke. Visit www.epa.gov/childsafety/breathable.

24. Test Your Home for Radon
    Radon is a cancer-causing natural radioactive gas that you can’t see, smell, or taste. Test your home or school for radon. Fix if you have a radon level of 4 pCi/L or more. Visit www.epa.gov/radon.

25. Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning
    Carbon monoxide (CO) is colorless, odorless, and toxic. It can kill you before you are aware it is in your home or school. Install CO alarms that meet UL, IAS, or Canadian standards outside at bedrooms.

26. Avoid Unnecessary Pesticide Use
    Don’t use pesticides if you don’t have to. Avoid scheduled treatments. If you must use a pesticide, use the least toxic pesticide possible and follow all instructions carefully. Learn more at www.epa.gov/pesticides/control.

27. Reduce Risk from Carbon Monoxide
    Never idle a car in the garage, even with the door open. Never use a generator indoors, in any enclosed space or near windows, doors, or other openings that could draw fumes indoors.

28. Keep Pets Out!
    Some pests, such as cockroaches, can trigger asthma attacks in children. Seal cracks where roaches and other bugs hide or get into your home or school.

29. Let’s Move!

30. Help Children Avoid “Nutrition Deficit Disorder”
    Call back on “screen time” and help kids enjoy the great outdoors with a day at the zoo, family time at the beach, a visit to a local park, or a walk in the woods. Check out America’s Great Outdoors Initiative at www.doi.gov/America’sGreatOutdoors.

31. Be SunWise
    Help kids avoid sunburns with sun-protective clothing, hats, and sunscreen. Visit www.epa.gov/sunwise.

Learn about environmental health www.epa.gov/children

EPA
EPA-100-E-11-001
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A document that contains 31 tips for a healthier, safer home.